

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 SCI-06 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01

SCEM-02 INT-08 AID-20 CEQ-02 CIAE-00 COA-02 DODE-00

EPA-04 INR-10 IO-13 NSF-04 NSC-10 NSAE-00 PM-07

RSC-01 SS-15 SPC-03 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-15 DRC-01 /163 W

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P 212030Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8898

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 3898

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENGR, SENU, DR

SUBJECT: PUERTO RICAN PETROLEUM SUPER PORT

REF: STATE 183685; SD-3885; SD-3848

1. AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED TO FON SEC GOMEZ CONCERN THAT EMOTIONS OVER SUPER PORT SEEMED TO BE INCREASING IN PROPORTION TO BREAKDOWN IN MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN GODR AND PUERTO RICAN AUTHORITIES. LACK OF FACTUAL EXCHANGE AND PUBLIC POSTURING WERE LEADING TO INCREASINGLY WILDER ALLEGATIONS. AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED GODR CONSIDER RE-INVITING MOSCOSO TO MEET FIRST WITH THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (CND) TO BE FOLLOWED BY A FIRM PRIVATE APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT BALAGUER IN ORDER TO OVERCOME WHATEVER RESENTMENT THAT MAY HAVE BEEN CREATED OVER THE LAST MINUTE SHIFT OF MOSCOSO'S DATE WITH THE PRESIDENT. GOMEZ SAW MERIT IN PROPOSAL AND SAID WOULD CONSULT JULIAN PEREZ, CHAIRMAN OF THE CND AND LET AMBASSADOR KNOW RESULTS.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE PRESS REPORTED THAT LUIS JULIAN PEREZ, WHEN ASKED ABOUT PRESS REPORTS THAT MOSCOSO WAS WILLING TO RETURN TO MEET WITH THE COMMISSION ON OCTOBER 10 IF HE WERE INVITED, REPLIED THAT MOSCOSO WOULD NOT BE INVITED, ALTHOUGH HE WAS "WELCOME" TO COME TO THE MEETING IF HE SO DESIRED. LOCAL PRESS
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REPORTS SEPT. 20 THAT GOV. HERNANDEZ COLON TOLD REPORTERS IN

SAN JUAN THAT HE HIMSELF WOULD BE HAPPY TO TALK WITH DOMINICANS ON MATTER. IN THIS REGARD PRESS REPORTS HERNANDEZ AS SAYING HE MADE THIS OFFER THROUGH DEPT. THIS MORNING'S PRESS REPORTS FON SEC GOMEZ SAYING THAT GODR WOULD ANNOUNCE POSITION SOON.

3. WE BELIEVE THAT FOR TIME BEING PROPER US ROLE IS TO URGE BOTH SIDES TO ESCHEW THE PUBLIC POLEMICS AND GET DOWN TO THE FACTS THROUGH DISCUSSION. WE WOULD ALSO PREFER TO AVOID ENGAGING IN AN EXCHANGE OF NOTES WHICH COULD BE MIS-USED TO RAISE PASSIONS. ACCORDINGLY, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO TAKE PUBLIC LINE THAT USG IS STUDYING GODR NOTE, A POSTURE WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN HERE COMFORTABLY FOR A WHILE ANYWAY. IN MEANTIME, WE SHALL USE OUR INFLUENCE WITH DOMINICAN OFFICIALS TO GET AT THE FACTS.

4. IT OCCURS TO US THAT DOMINICANS WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY SUSPECT PUERTO RICAN PRESENTATION OF FACTS AS SELF-SERVING, ALTHOUGH FONSEC GOMEZ TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT HE KNOWS GOVERNOR HERNANDEZ WELL AND HIS BROTHER ANGEL EVEN BETTER, BOTH OF WHOM HE SAID HE REGARDS HIGHLY. POSSIBLY SOMEWHAT MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE DOMINICANS, ALTHOUGH ALSO NOT TOTALLY EX PARTE FROM THEIR VIEW, MIGHT BE A FACTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE ENVIORNMENTAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DR OF A SUPER PORT DONE BY US EXPERTS. DEPT MAY WISH TO EXPLORE THE AVAILABILITY OF A PRESTIGIOUS EXPERT IN THIS FIELD TO ASSESS THE PUERTO RICAN ANALYSIS. SUCH ASSESSMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE UNDERTAKEN DISCREETLY, FOR IF THE CONCLUSION SUPPORTS THE DOMINICAN CONTENTION THAT THE SUPER PORT WOULD BE HARMFUL, WE MAY WANT TO THEN CONSIDER THE PROS AND CONS OF MAKING SUCH RESULTS KNOWN. IF THE ASSESSMENT SUPPORTED THE PUERTO RICAN CONTENTION, HOWEVER, WE WOULD OF COURSE WANT TO PRESENT IT TO THE GODR.
HURWITCH

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